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November 8, 1982

(21)
REFER
NSC

~~MEMORANDUM FOR~~

THE NSC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

With respect to the Nitze paper, it is suggested that a decision on our policy toward the IL-28's will have to await Khrushchev's reply to the President and the following comments relate only to the contingency of one of our surveillance planes being shot at or destroyed.

The two contingencies to be considered are an attack on a low-level plane, presumably by Cuban antiaircraft, and the use of SAMs against a high-level flight. In the former case, we would have to be sure we were not dealing with a trigger-happy Cuban rather than a policy decision. In the case of an attack on a low-level flight, the President should send an urgent message to Khrushchev stating we will be obliged to retaliate immediately in the event of any further attack on our planes and ask that he urge the Cubans immediately to cease such attacks. The President would inform Khrushchev that our action would be limited to that necessary to enable our surveillance to continue. There would be no mention of quarantine at this stage.

If there were an attack on a U-2 by a SAM site, we should probably assume that this is a deliberate Soviet decision. In this case, we should arrange for a message from the President to Khrushchev to be delivered as near as possible simultaneously with an attack on the SAM site concerned. The message to Khrushchev would explain the vital necessity of continuing aerial surveillance pending establishment of other arrangements, would refer to Kennedys's statement that all aircraft in Cuba is in Cuban hands, and state that the action taken would be limited to that necessary to enable us to continue surveillance. In both cases, the OAs would be informed of our intended action as far in advance as possible, without request for an endorsement. It might

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to inform the Secretary General of the United Nations of our action and the reason for it.

At the time our action was taken, we might approach allied and friendly governments in an effort to prevent all shipments to Cuba, but we should not get ourselves in position where we would have to stop Soviet ships at this stage. The Soviets are already feeling the burden of economic aid to Cuba and action on our part to increase that burden would have a considerable effect.

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(Paragraph Three Only)

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